

## The Mockingbird Society's Homeless Youth Initiative

### *What is the Homeless Youth Initiative?*

The Homeless Youth Initiative (HYI) is a pilot program of The Mockingbird Society. The HYI is independent of the King County Youth and Young Adult (YYA) Plan. HYI's goal is to elevate youth voice and strengthen advocacy efforts regarding the issue of youth homelessness. Our intention is to engage, train, and support youth and young adults from across King County to provide their insight, wisdom, and experience in addressing systemic problems and solutions within the homeless youth system at the local, county, state, and federal levels.

### *Who can be a HYI participant and what is the role of service providers?*

The HYI's Engagement Specialist (ES) will be recruiting youth and young adults ages 13 – 25 across King County who have experienced homelessness to give input based on their personal experience. The ES's recruitment will also rely heavily on referrals and input from service providers.

### *Where will HYI meetings take place?*

We plan to hold regular meetings with HYI participants at partner agency sites throughout specific regions in King County: South King County, North/East King County, the University District, Downtown, and South Seattle. Partner agencies are those at which The Mockingbird Society hopes to have a regular presence to engage youth in advocacy efforts. During these meetings, we aim to solicit input from YYAs who will engage in activities designed to develop leadership, advocacy, public speaking, and interpersonal skills, as well as their technical expertise regarding the scope of the homeless youth problem. HYI participants will earn stipends for their participation.

### *When will this happen?*

The ES will be in the community creating connections with service providers through March and April 2013 to discuss potential partnering as a HYI host agency and to receive input from service providers about HYI development. Regular meetings with YYA are projected to start in May 2013, with an expected event to follow in June where youth will be asked to give their input.

### **To learn more, please contact:**

**Katy Lukas, Homeless Youth Initiative Engagement Specialist**

katy@mockingbirdsociety.org

Office phone: (206) 407-2198

Mobile phone: (206) 595-6828